

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

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43

ACTION CU-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 USIE-00 SSO-00 /017 W

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O R 011450Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1587

AMCONSUL ZAGREB IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

UNCLAS PRAGUE 3432

FOR LAPO ESCORT JONES

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXC, CZ

SUBJECT: LOS ANGELES PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA (LAPO)

1. CZECHOSLOVAK AIRLINES (CSA) ADVISED US DEC. 1 ITS PLANS TO TRANSPORT LAPO AND ITS PROPERTIES FROM SOFIA TO PRAGUE ON DECEMBER 8. ACCORDING TO CSA, PREVIOUS PLAN TO ARRANGE CHARTER FLIGHT FOR ORCHESTRA MEMBERS AND TWO FREIGHT PLANES, WITH BALANCE OF ORCHESTRA MEMBERS COMING BY REGULAR PASSENGER FLIGHT, DISCARDED BECAUSE NECESSARY AIRCRAFT UNAVAILABLE.

2. CSA'S CURRENT PROPOSAL (WHICH WE FIND RISKY) IS TO SEND AN IL-62 FROM PRAGUE TO SOFIA AND RETURN TO PRAGUE DEC. 8 WITH ALL THE CARGO AND 96 LAPO MEMBERS AND THEIR BAGGAGE. THIS PLANE IS SCHEDULED TO ORIGINATE ITS FLIGHT IN HAVANA THE PREVIOUS DAY, WHICH ADDS A FURTHER ELEMENT OF RISK.

3. WHILE WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO MEET WITH MFA AND PRAGOKONCERT TO SEEK ANOTHER SOLUTION, REQUEST DEPARTMENTAL APPROVAL TO HIRE THE NECESSARY CARGO AND PASSENGER PLANE OR PLANES TO COMPLETE THE SOFIA-PRAGUE RUN IF PRAGOKONCERT UNABLE TO COME THROUGH.

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4. WE CURRENTLY EXPLORING POSSIBILITIES WITH

BALKANAIR, PANAM, BEA, AND HAVE ASKED EMBASSY VIENNA'S ADMIN SECTION FOR ASSISTANCE IN LOCATING AIRCRAFT AND OBTAINING PRICES. WILL ADVISE DEPARTMENT AS SOON AS BEST SOLUTION IS APPARENT.

5. WE WILL ATTEMPT TO HAVE PRAGOKONCERT ASSUME AT LEAST PART OF PAYMENT, BUT THEIR REGARDING THIS SOLUTION AS ADEQUATE, AND LACK OF HARD CURRENCY WILL PROBABLY POSE PROBLEMS.

6. DETAILS OF LATEST PRAGOKONCERT PROPOSAL AS FOLLOWS: TWENTY-ONE MUSICIANS TO TRAVEL PRAGUE VIA SCHEDULED FLIGHT OK 853 DEPARTING SOFIA 10:45 A.M. AND ARRIVING PRAGUE 11:50 A.M. BALANCE OF ORCHESTRA AND ALL INSTRUMENTS PROPERTIES TO GO BY CHARTER FLIGHT (IL-62) ARRIVING SOFIA 10:55 A.M. AND DEPARTING AT 14:50 P.M. FLIGHT SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE PRAGUE 15:00.

7. ACTION REQUESTED: PERMISSION TO LEASE AIRCRAFT IF NEEDED. ADVISE BY IMMEDIATE.
BYRNE

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